



# MR. WINKLE GOES TO WAR

By THEODORE PRATT

W.N.U. RELEASE



THE STORY THUS FAR: Forty-four-year-old Wilbert Winkle, who operates a repair shop in the alley back of his home, is notified by his draft board that he is to be I-A. He breaks the bad news to his domineering wife, Amy, who becomes suddenly tender. Mr. Winkle is sent to Camp Squibb, where, after graduating from Motor Mechanics school, he leaves for home on a furlough. Amy hardly knows him, and his dog barks at him ferociously. Mr. Winkle and his friend, Mr. Tinker, soon find themselves on the high seas in a huge convoy. They head on the island of Talizo and report at one of the repair shops. Some of their friends are also on the island. There is a bad mist, that might screen Japs.

### CHAPTER XII

Mr. Winkle pulled his steel helmet more securely on his head and pressed on the accelerator of the car.

The jeep shot off the road and along the sand trail leading to the beach. The command car stood where it had been left, in a partially cleared space enclosed by low palms. Mr. Winkle stopped alongside it.

As they got out, he glanced at the tent, set at one side among the trees. Ordinarily, the off-duty members of the machine-gun crew would be lolling or sleeping there. It was empty.

Up on the low ridge, fifty feet away, a helmeted head appeared above the sand. It was the Alphabet. Recognizing them, he waved briefly and then disappeared.

"It ain't like him," Mr. Tinker observed, "not to be hospitable to his friends."

Mr. Winkle took their tools from the back seat of the jeep. His hands shook a little. He pulled his helmet still more securely over his head and said, "We'd better get to work."

"We can take a minute," Mr. Tinker said, "to see what's going on up there."

Reluctantly, Mr. Winkle followed him to the ridge.

They didn't receive a very warm welcome. "If you got to come here," Sergeant Czeideskrowski snapped, "get down in."

They scrambled below ground level, hunching themselves into the fox



The jeep shot off the road and along the sand trail.

hole, crowding Freddie, Jack, and the other men who sat listening attentively or kneeled to stare out over the ocean.

Freddie, at the machine gun, whose snout pointed across the beach, greeted them, "Maybe you're just in time for the performance."

The Alphabet picked up the field telephone. He identified his post, listened for a moment and then said, "Yes, sir. . . . No, sir, it hasn't lifted yet."

He put the instrument down and told his visitors, "That was your boss. He wanted to know if you got here. Like you heard, I didn't give away you being with us, but you better get back where you belong and beat it as soon as you're through."

They went, Mr. Winkle with alacrity and Mr. Tinker with regret. From out over the sea there came a sudden roar. Guns began to spit virtually at the same instant.

"Duck!" yelled Mr. Winkle. He dropped the wrench he was holding and dived under the command car. Lying there, his heart beating so fast it seemed to equal the rapid firing of the guns, he expected Mr. Tinker to join him.

Instead, he heard the quick firing of a Garand. He could see Mr. Tinker's feet and part of his legs, braced to take up the shock from the gun.

The plane came over. It appeared to know exactly where to come. The firing stopped.

Mr. Winkle opened his eyes. Again he saw Mr. Tinker, who was now standing halfway to the ridge. He was reloading his rifle and looking malevolently at the sky. The plane came back.

Once more it spit heavy death from its nose, and lighter, more gentle death from its wings. Mr. Tinker fired right back at it.

It wasn't until a moment after

the plane had gone again, out over the ocean, that Mr. Tinker's arms dropped and the rifle slid from his hands.

His voice choked and gurgled when he called, "Pop. . . . Hey Pop. . . ." Then he crumpled, like something stiff gone soft, folding up and sinking to the ground.

Mr. Winkle, watching this from beneath the command car, couldn't believe at first that it was actual. It had happened too quickly, too much without warning to be any different from field tactics in which picked men simulated those hit when the planes came over.

Then he realized that the plane hadn't been a friendly one.

He crawled out from beneath the car and got to his feet. His legs seemed to function automatically, without any volition on his part, as he made his way to Mr. Tinker.

The blood spreading over Mr. Tinker's chest made him sick and weak. He bent and touched him, whispering his name. But Mr. Tinker didn't answer.

Mr. Winkle realized something else. When the plane went over the second time the Alphabet's machine gun hadn't fired.

From the fox hole now there came no movement. All about there was silence.

He ran to the ridge. He arrived breathing hard, not from exertion, but from excitement. He gasped at what he saw.

One of the shells from the plane's cannon had exploded in the fox hole. The bodies of the men lay about, some of them half buried. Freddie was sprawled over the gun, as if protecting it. Sergeant Czeideskrowski was on his back, his open eyes staring straight up at the burning sun and not blinking. In a tangled pile, Mr. Winkle caught sight of the side of Jack's still face.

A single thought ran through him repetitiously. How will I ever tell the Pettigrews? He asked himself. How will I ever tell the Pettigrews?

The sound of surging water made him turn his head.

Out of the mist had come a flat-nosed Japanese assault boat.

Behind it, but somewhat off to either side, were two more.

Mr. Winkle sank to his knees, both to get out of sight and because his legs wouldn't hold him up any more.

After a moment, he knew that he must do something. He realized that the whole position on Talizo might be lost if the men in those assault boats ever landed and infiltrated through the jungle.

He found himself scrabbling about in the sand of the fox hole for the field phone. It wasn't in sight.

He saw the Signal Corps wire leading up out of the hole. He grabbed it, and started pulling on it.

A broken piece of the shattered phone came into his hands.

He dropped it from nerveless fingers.

Helplessly, Mr. Winkle watched the leading assault boat come on. Now it was less than a hundred yards from the beach.

He looked back at the jeep. Unless the bullet holes through its windshield meant more than they appeared to, the car would still run. He could get back in it to give the alarm at the next post.

But by that time, the Japs would have effected their landing.

Mr. Winkle wished that it was not he who had been placed in this position. He wanted, fervently, for it to be another man, a fighter, a killer, a younger, a different, a better man than he. It flashed through his mind that it had been a mistake to draft and make a soldier out of a mouse.

He felt guilty at not having resigned from the Army. A different man here now, in his place, would have known what to do.

Then Mr. Winkle knew what to do. It occurred to him that he hadn't thought of himself, of his own safety, when considering getting away in the jeep. He had thought only to give the warning of what was happening.

Also, he saw Mr. Tinker lying sprawled out there on the ground. He remembered how he had ducked under the command car while Mr. Tinker fired his rifle. The recollection made him feel craven, especially when now Mr. Tinker would never get his Jap.

He decided that he must get him for Mr. Tinker.

There were the Alphabet, Freddie, Jack, and the other men to think about, too. It infuriated him that Sergeant Czeideskrowski lay dead. It made him see red to think that after Freddie had been made into a decent person, he had been killed. His brain seared with a hot flame at the thought of Jack.

It seemed to be the most natural thing in the world to pull Freddie's body from the gun. Swiftly, he examined it. The gun was intact. It needed only a new belt of ammunition.

He clawed about in the sand and among the bodies for an ammunition box. He stepped on soft flesh and didn't mind it.

Digging furiously, he found what he wanted. He stripped the nearly spent belt from the gun, and inserted a fresh one.

As he worked he knew how good and wise it was that he had been trained to operate a machine gun. He wished that he was better at it. But a rising surge of confidence

made him sure he would be good enough.

The first boat was nearly at the shore. Mr. Winkle sighted the gun for the spot he figured the men would be when they stepped out. That was what he had been taught.

He still had a moment. He employed it by coolly taking off his glasses and wiping them dry with his handkerchief. He wiped his face and neck, both of which streamed with sweat.

He glanced about. This was where he would die. He had often wondered in what circumstances and in what locality it would occur. Now he knew. It wasn't such a bad place. He saw it almost for the first time, the waving palm trees, the flowering hibiscus.

He liked it. It was romantic.

Amy, he thought, would be glad to know it was such an attractive place.

It occurred to him that for the first time in his life he wasn't afraid to die. He even exulted in it. He heard his voice. He was laughing. He felt released from hard, painful bonds. He knew that, at last, Wilbert George Winkle, in the flesh and not in a newspaper headline, was proud to fight.

He turned back to the gun. It was nearly time.

The assault boat beached in shallow water. Men started jumping out and splashing through the water. He could see their faces, brown, slant-eyed, expressionless. Mr. Winkle let them all get out. Then, carefully sighting, he squeezed the trigger.

There was a snap and a jerk. The gun jammed without firing. Frantically, he worked at the gun. One finger caught in the mechanism. He tore it away. Blood spurting, but he paid no attention. He kept picking at the jammed cartridge. Finally he got it out, and a new one in the firing chamber, the gun prepared properly.

Five men had run ahead, off to one side. Mr. Winkle swung his gun around, concentrating on them first. This time the gun fired. He was astonished to see the men fall. He wasn't sure if one of them got away.

He swung the gun back, spitting vengeance at the larger group. As the bullets spat out from under his hands, a still new and greater world opened before him.

This was what he had lived for. Life had a meaning and a purpose of which he had never dreamed.

He sprayed the milling men down there.

He had a mad, blind desire to annihilate and destroy the enemy. It seemed like a torrent pent up in him for years and spilling out in one overwhelming rush.

He sprayed it on the milling men down there. That burst was for Jack. That one was for Freddie. This long one for Mr. Tinker. Now one for the Alphabet. Still more for the other men. Wilbert Winkle, who operates The Fixit Shop, first married selectee in the 36 to 45 draft-age group to be called, is killing these enemies of his country. He is anxious to defend the four freedoms. It's worth any sacrifice, if need be, his very life.

Wilbert Winkle wanted more enemies to kill when all these were gone, when no one stood on his feet in the writhing, shrieking mass on the wet sand.

He saw more at the approach of the other two boats. Quite calmly, without excitement of any kind, and not realizing he was following Army procedure painstakingly taught him, he inserted another fresh belt of ammunition.

Instinctively, as if something told him to, he looked behind him, over the edge of the fox hole.

A Jap officer was stealing his way toward him. He was the one who had got away from the group of five. The swarthy little man was between the cars and the body of Mr. Tinker.

Mr. Winkle grabbed the nearest rifle. He swung it into position to fire, resting it on the edge of the fox hole.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

## IMPROVED UNIFORM INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

By HAROLD L. LUNDQUIST, D. D. Of The Moody Bible Institute of Chicago. Released by Western Newspaper Union.

### Lesson for October 29

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#### THE CHRISTIAN MOTIVE FOR LIVING International Temperance Sunday

LESSON TEXT—Psalm 4:5-8; Luke 4:4; John 8:5; Romans 12:1, 2; 13:12-14. GOLDEN TEXT—Seek those things which are above.—Colossians 3:1.

Disciplined living should be the goal of each of us. Life is not to be lived carelessly, influenced by chance events or passing impulses. Such discipline of life would keep men from the temptations which lead them into intemperance and sin.

A life can be properly disciplined, only as it is controlled by Christian motives. Such a life has—

I. Spiritual Gladness (Ps. 4:5-8). The psalmist had faced the distressing questioning of men who derided him for his faith. They were unbelievers who demanded of him what good his religion did (v. 6). He has an answer, and it is the testimony of his own experience.

Those around him sought gladness in the harvest of grain and in the wine which was supposed to give a lift to their spirits. This was their joy. Well, the man of God had something infinitely superior. He had gladness in his heart. It was not dependent on outward circumstances—it was within.

Then note, too, that it did not rest on something that happened, or on some fellow man. "Thou (God) hast put gladness in my heart." That means real joy and satisfaction.

II. Spiritual Food (Luke 4:4; John 6:35). It is delightful to have true gladness, but man needs food if he is to grow and to work. That is true spiritually, for he must have the needed nourishment of life here also.

Jesus when tempted (Luke 4:4) because He was hungry saw beyond the temporal need, and declared that life should be controlled by a higher principle. The spiritual has a place of supremacy over the physical in the life of the Christian man or woman. The body with its desires is to be subject to the definite control of the spirit, which takes its orders from God.

The explanation of the awful alcoholic debauchery of our day is found right here. Men have given their bodies the supreme authority and they are driven by the lusts of their flesh. What they need more than legal reform or restriction of sale of liquor (and we believe in both) is the regeneration of their souls by the grace of God in Christ Jesus. Let us bring them the gospel.

John 6:35 makes known the fact that Jesus, the bread of life, satisfies every need of men. Every normal hunger and thirst finds full satisfaction in Him. Have you tried Him as the One to meet the need of your hungry heart?

III. Spiritual Service (Rom. 12:1, 2). "Reasonable service," says the Authorized Version; "spiritual service," says the Revised Version. Both are right. The man who is really reasonable will be spiritual and will render to God a sacrificial service.

Note that it is a "living sacrifice" that is said to be "holy, acceptable to God." This is not a case of a single act of deep devotion (great as that may be), but a going on in the daily walk to live for Christ. That calls for grace and power, and He is ready and willing to give both to each of His children.

That experience with God means a non-conformity to the world, which is too little spoken of and less practiced in the church today. The one who professes to follow Christ is simply not to be conformed to the ways of this wicked world. There is to be a completely transforming experience of the grace of God, that takes you out of this world while you are still in it.

IV. Spiritual Walk (Rom. 13:12-14). Christians are the children of the morning. They walk in the light (1 John 1:7). This world walks in darkness. No one needs any argument to prove that point—just look about you.

The deeds of darkness are evil deeds, and men dwell in darkness because they love evil (John 3:19). That means that the children of light must walk circumspectly and "becomingly" (that's a good word!) in this world. Thus we may attract others out of the darkness into the light, so that they too may put aside "reveling and drunkenness," yes, and also "strife and jealousy." Those go together.

The way to victory is to be clothed with the Lord Jesus and His righteousness (v. 14). That is a real "armor of light" with which we may be protected.

Note also that we are studiously to avoid making any provision for the desires of the flesh. Put such things away, and with them will go the temptation to use them. Some professing Christians need to heed this word by destroying some beverages which they may have on hand—just to give one example.



GREGORY PECK is the hottest thing in town. Some say he is a second Gary Cooper. Actually he's the first Gregory Peck.

Critics went all out about him in "Days of Glory"—but not the picture.

He co-stars with Ingrid Bergman in "Spellbound," which Alfred Hitchcock directed.

He's the only male star except Gary Cooper whom Ingrid Bergman has ever been able to look up to. Peck is 6 feet 2. This lanky young man has not been built up by desperate Hollywood studios scurrying to alleviate the acute male shortage.

Greg was a pre-medical student at the University of California when he took part in a school production of "Anna Christie" and decided to give up medicine and become an actor. He got his first real break in the Katharine Cornell play "The Doctor's Dilemma." That decided him to become an actor. But before that he was a member of the Barter theater in Abingdon, Va.

He was a stroke on the Bear crew that rowed at Poughkeepsie in 1933.

Lowly Beginning Peck's first professional experience in showmanship was as a barker on the Midway at the New York's World's fair.

In a contest he won a two-year scholarship to the New York Neighborhood Playhouse. Between semesters he won the Barter theater award.

Guthrie McClintic saw him in a Barter theater play and engaged him for the tour with "The Doctor's Dilemma."

Made his Broadway debut in "The Morning Star."

Played juvenile lead opposite Jane Cowl in "Punch and Julia."

Also played male lead opposite Martha Scott in "The Willow and I" and opposite Geraldine Fitzgerald in "Sons and Soldiers."

Received no less than a dozen motion picture offers before he accepted the RKO-Selznick contract.

Strictly Personal Gregory Peck's wife, Greta Rice, is a nonprofessional.

He is modest, intelligent, and conservative. He is prouder of his small son than he is of star billing. He's a collector of "how to bring up babies" information. He boasts that he pins a mighty neat diaper on his young son.

Greg says that if as an actor he has to have a hobby, the help shortage has fortunately provided one for him. He is a pretty fair and passably energetic gardener.

Greta and Gregory Peck do very well without night clubs. Their favorite entertainment is visiting with half a dozen friends. Greg likes discussions—any subject.

He swims and rides, but his tennis is bad, and he's never mastered golf.

Behind the Scenes Peck is a quick study. He learns a page of dialog merely by reading it through twice.

He always had stage fright at dress rehearsals. This tenseness lasts several days of shooting on each picture.

He doesn't believe the "hoity-toity" attitude stage actors have toward the screen is justified. For his money some of the best actors in the world are right in this town.

He's under the spell of Alfred Hitchcock. Says, "It's a privilege to work under his direction."

He'd like to do one rootin', tootin' western. His enjoyment of horseback riding has something to do with this ambition.

One Appearance Greg's father was a druggist in San Diego. He'd always wished that he was a doctor. Greg had a great devotion to his father—still has. He decided that if his father thought doctoring was the ideal career, doctoring was for him.

At the University of California Greg studied medicine.

Then came the school production of "Anna Christie." With that one appearance he discovered he really liked acting.

When he finished school he left for New York.

He applied for the job as a guide at Radio city. Then came his scholarship to the New York Neighborhood Playhouse, which was followed by the Barter theater award. And he was on his way up.

Would Hamlet Pass? O, my gosh! The Hays office has put a ceiling on the number of bodies you can have in a western. New it's eight. . . . Producers are mighty sensitive, too, about gunwomen on the screen these days. Are they afraid it might give some Hollywood ladies an idea? . . . Elizabeth Taylor is star stuff in "National Velvet," as I predicted she would be. In "Hold High the Torch," she's also starred. . . . They've also got the raven, Pete, who barks like a dog.

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